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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-10 EA-07 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-10 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-14 USIA-04 AID-05 OMB-01 SAJ-01 IO-03

ACDA-10 NIC-01 DRC-01 /093 W
---------- 052511
R 090712Z OCT 74
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1668
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2258

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SY
SUBJ: ASAD MAKES OFFICIAL VISIT TO NORTH KOREA

1. SUMMARY: SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFEZ AL-ASAD HAS COMPLETED A FOUR-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO NORTH KOREA, SEPTEMBER 28 TO OCTOBER 2. MAIN SOURCE OF OUR INFORMATION IS LOCAL NEWS MEDIA WHICH GAVE VISIT TO P BILLING AND CHARACTERIZED VISIT AS WARM AND FRIENDLY. STATEMENTS BY BOTH ASAD AND PRESIDENT KIM IL SUNG SAID THAT THERE WAS TOTAL AGREEMENT ON ALL SUBJECTS. ALL SUBJECTS MEANT KOREAN SUPPORT FOR SYRIAN POSITION IN MIDDLE EAST AND SYRIAN SUPPORT FOR NORTH KOREAN POSITON VIS-A-VIS SOUTH KOREA. VISIT PROVIDED SARG WITH OPPORTUNITY TO MAINTAIN ITS INTERNATIONAL IMAGE AS STAUNCH MEMBER OF SOCIALIST AND NONALIGNED WORLD. VISIT ALSO RESULTED IN PROTOCOL PROVIDING FOR SOME NORTH KOREAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN POULTRY, FISH, AND IRON ORE PROSPECTING. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT ASAD RETURNED TO DAMASCUS AFTER COMPLETING FOUR-DAY STATE VISIT TO NORTH KOREA. THIS IS FOURTH VISIT
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TO COMMUNIST COUNTRY IN LESS THAN THREE MONTHS. (OTHERS WERE

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TO YUGOSLAVIA, RUMANIA, AND BULGARIA.) TRIP INCLUDED STOPS IN MOSCOW, WHERE ASAD MET WITH BRESHNEV AND PODGORNY. SYRIAN MEMBERS OF OFFICIAL DELEGATION INCLUDED: ABDALLAH AHMAR, ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL, BAATH PARTY; MOHAMAD HEIDAR, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS; DR. NOURALLAH NOURALLAH, MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING; FAWZI KHAYYALI, MINISTER OF CULTURE AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE; HUSSEIN KUWAIDIR, MINISTER OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS; AHMAD ISKANDAR AHMAD, MINISTER OF INFORMATION; MURSIL ABU OMAR, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRARIAN REFORM; DR. ADIB AD-DAWUDI, POLITICAL ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT; LT. GEN. ABD AL-RAZZAQ AD-DARDARI MILITARY ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT; YASIR AL-FARRA, SYRIAN AMBASSADOR TO NORTH KOREA.

3. TWO SIDES FORMED THREE COMMITTEES TO WORK ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. PRESIDENT, IN MEANTIME, VISITED ASSEMBLY PLANTS, MILITARY BASE, AND ORPHANAGE. THERE WAS MASS RALLY ON OCTOBER 1, WHERE ASAD STRESSED COMMON TIES BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. "OUR ARMY IS CLOSE TO YOU DESPITE ITS VAST DISTANCE BECAUSE WE STRUGGLE FOR COMMON GOALS." HE ELABORATED, SAYING, "OUR CAUSES IN ME AND KOREA CONSTITUTE ONE CAUSE AND IT IS OUR DUTY TOGETHER TO DEFEAT IMPERIALISM AND ZIONISM." DESCRIBING SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST, ASAD REPORTEDLY SAID THAT ARAB FORCES HAD TAUGHT ZIONIST AGGRESORS GOOD LESSON IN OCTOBER AND GOLAN WARS AND THAT IT HAD BEEN THIS LESSON WHICH FORCED ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW FROM ARAB OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

4. JOINT COMMUNIQUE WAS OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH SIDE TO GIVE FULL SUPPORT TO ISSUE MOST IMPORTANT FOR OTHER. COMMUNIQUE ALSO SAID ASAD POINTED OUT THAT PRESENT TENSE SITUATION IN AREA WHICH IS RESULT OF ISRAEL'S POLICY TO "CRUSH INTER-NATIONAL EFFORTS AIMED AT ESTABLISHING JUST AND DURABLE PEACE IN ME." KOREAN GOVERNMENT DENOUNCED ISRAEL'S "BARBARIC AND PROVOCATIVE ACTS AGAINST SYRIA," CALLING FOR COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL OCCUPIED ARAB LANDS AND RECOGNITION OF NATIONALIST RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. NORTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT ALSO DECLARED PLO IS SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.

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5. KOREAN GOVERNMENT DESCRIBED IT POLICY FOR REUNIFICATION OF NORTH AND SOUTH AND EFFORTS KOREA WAS MAKING TO "FOIL DESPERATE EVASIONS UNDERTAKEN BY AMERICAN IMPERIALISM...TO OBSTRUCT" UNIFICATION OF COUNRTY. SARG DENOUNCED "PLOTS OF IMPERIALISM AND ITS AGENTS IN SOUTH KOREA" TO CREATE TWO ARTIFICIAL KOREAS. SARG ALSO EXPRESSED ITS COMPLETE SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLE TO EVACUATE ALL FOREIGN FORCES FROM SOUTH KOREA AND FOR AN UNSPECIFIED FIVE-POINT PROGRAM SUBMITTED BY NORTH

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KOREA FOR UNIFYING COUNTRY. THUS SYRIAN SIDE "DEMANDED" EVACUATION OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES STATIONED IN SOUTH KOREA UNDER UN FLAG.

6. COMMUNIQUE ENDORSED NON-ALIGNMENT AND THEN MENTIONED HOST OF NON-ALIGNED FAVORITES: COMPLETE SUPPORT FOR CAMBODIANS IN THEIR ATTEMPT "LIBERATE" THEIR LAND AND FOR PEOPLE OF VIETNAM AND LAOS; INDEPENDENCE, SOVEREIGNTY, AND INTEGRITY OF CYPRUS BY REMOVAL OF ALL FOREIGN BASES AND FORCES; CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION STRUGGLE AGAINST COLONIALISM IN VARIOUS PARTS OF AFRICA.

7. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS MOHAMMED HEIDER TOLD REPORTERS ON HIS RETURN TO DAMASCUS THAT VISIT WILL HAVE IMPORTANT BEARINGS ON ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. HE STATED THAT PROTOCOL SIGNED DURING VISIT CALLED FOR NORTH KOREAN ASSISTANCE IN EXPANDING POULTY AND RICE PRODUCTION IN SYRIA. NORTH KOREA WILL ALSO SEND EXPERTS TO ASSIST SARG IN EXPLOITATION OF IRON ORE DEPOSITS AND TO STUDY POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING BASINS (SIC) FOR PRODUCING FISHING BOATS AND VESSELS.

8. COMMENT: IN OUR VIEW, PRIMARY PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS OPPORTUNITY FOR SARG TO MAINTAIN IMAGE AS ONE OF PROGRESSIVE AND SOCIALIST GOVERNMENTS IN WORLD. VISIT TO NORTH KOREA UNDOUBTELY PLEASED SOVIETS WITHOUT COSTING SYRIANS ANYTHING. AND, VISIT DID GIVE ASAD CHANCE TO SEE SOVIET LEADERS AGAIN. PRESS COVERAGE OF EVENTS AND STATEMENTS DID NOT REVEAL ANY NEW SYRIAN POSITION ON ISSUES DISCUSSED.
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